

They are here,
and they want our men!

THE OMEN

Volume 26
Issue 5
April 28th

Bat Boy accepted into Hampshire
to promote diversity
Bat Boy accepted into Hampshire
to promote diversity
"Of course we'll accept freaks,
liberals eat that stuff up!"
~Admissions

Hampshire harboring
illegal aliens?

Scandal!

Human Love Slave
to Aliens!



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omen

Volume 26, Issue 6

April 14th, 2006

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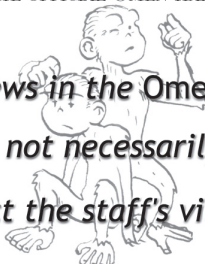
Burning Man

THE OFFICIAL OMEN HAIKU:

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)



Front Cover by:

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to submit

Submissions are due Saturdays before 5 p.m. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, and typed hard copies will also be accepted, reluctantly. Label your disks well and they will get back to you. Get your stuff to Jacob Lefton, Merrill B307, x4371. You may also use e-mail. Send e-mail submissions to jwl04@hampshire.edu

And be sure to read our policy box at the bottom of the next page before submitting.

Visit the Omen's barely updated website! omen.hampshire.edu

"God save the wenches!"

- attributed to *Pirates*, that Pirates of the Caribbean porn

THE WORST ONE YET

Editorial

by Jacob Lefton, Editor-in-Chief

Well, it's Tuesday night, and the *Omen* is still not done. Mark my words though, it will be out on time. It may or may not be the last issue. Some of our money this semester is going to reprint the New Orleans publication. Two hundred fifty of those were distributed on a Friday morning, and by the evening, they were basically gone. This is really awesome. I want to specially thank Molly for the amazing job she did on layout.

This issue of the *Omen* is pretty special. We're printing the second rebuttle to an article I've gotten since I started as Editor-in-Chief. The first was to Josh Hilliard's article bashing Central Records, "O Hampshire, Listen to My Words of Criticism" (Feb 18, Vol. 26, Issue 2). It was from one of the President's administrative assistants, but he didn't feel it was written for the wide audience of the *Omen*.

This second one is printed on page ten of this issue, and you should all read it and take notes. Notes on submitting to the *Omen*, that is! I don't particularly agree with the article because it's in response to my editorial from the last *Omen*, "Drag Ball Is Not Worth All The Fuss," but the authors are making an effort to have their opinions heard. I'm sure all you faithful readers have your own thoughts that deserve to be heard, so say the magic word "submit!" and be carried away to the magical land of *Omen*. It's like good sex.

There's another gift for you all. The CORE Alcohol and Drug report was finished and give to administrators earlier this month. I got my hands on a copy and am providing it to you in these precious pages. May you use this knowledge well. I reference the Jessica Payne

Retention study, which can be found on the intranet. Go to 'Resources' at the top and then click on 'Qualitative Research.' The results are really interesting. Some might even say 'damning', but I'm not going to be that harsh.

Now, I think they should do a study of random oddities on campus. We're talking about things like a doorstep under the radiator in the Dakin and Merrill living rooms. There's no door for six feet around them, and the doors open the wrong direction anyway. Also, why do the bathrooms have *six* coat hooks? I use one of them if I'm wearing a coat, sometimes, but six is pretty intense. Maybe they're really the Dakin-Merrill Rainy Day Orgy Rooms, but we just haven't realized that yet. I mean, they lock from the inside, have a high window, and could easily be outfitted with pillows and blankets. Just, you know, a thought.

MEANWHILE... if you really want to procrastinate, and you're really hungry because you didn't eat much for dinner and you just ate a whole bunch of candy so you're sugar crashing, you should take as many different types of asian noodles as you can find and mix all their flavor packets together. It's amazing and will give you a good excuse to waste an hour that you could spend doing something useful like homework.

Rachel just said, "We are so good at not doing homework," because Chris just started playing the new Dresden Dolls album for her. Then Keegan walked into the room and asked for food. Now they're arguing about body language. Now a girl is screaming about something.

Chris is making this week's *Omen* cover as we speak. Pretty darn awesome, huh?

I just realized that the right column is wider than the left column. What's up with that?



policy

The *Omen* is Hampshire's longest-running bi-weekly publication, established by Stephanie Cole in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus, administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion. Everything the *Omen* receives, provided it is sent from a member of the Hampshire community, will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Although we find such things amusing and entertaining for countless hours, it is just not an option in this forum. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously damages a person's reputation.

The *Omen* will not edit anything you write (except

spelling and grammar). You must sign your real name (no anonymous submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the *Omen* do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

There is no *Omen* staff, save those positions of editor-in-chief and layout editor. To qualify for community service you must be a consistent contributor and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday after release of an issue in the Leadership Center at 6PM. Everyone, everywhere, living or dead, should come.

The *Omen* loves you.



CORE ALCOHOL AND DRUG Report

by Jacob Lefton

In early April, the results of the CORE Alcohol and Drug survey that almost half the student body participated in became available. The results of this survey have, until now, not been released to students. There are a variety of reasons for this.

Some have expressed concern about putting this survey out without a proper frame in which to discuss the results. On its own, the report tells a story that has been described as “shocking,” and may make some uncomfortable: Tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, amphetamine, cocaine, and opiate use is up from 2000. Nearly half of respondents binge within two weeks prior to the study (five or more drinks in one sitting), up more than ten percent, and the average number of drinks per week has also risen significantly.

Another story the trend tells is about social expectations. A majority of respondents (89%) think that the average student uses drugs at least once per week, and almost all of the respondents (96%) think that the average student uses alcohol at least once per week. The percentages of people who prefer *not* to have alcohol or drugs at parties shows a downward trend.

The executive summary compares Hampshire to other colleges. Although it seems Hampshire students do more drugs overall than other schools, many other numbers are similar. Hampshire's trends are pointing up, and there is no given data on the trends of the reference group.

Some administrators feel that taking this survey alone will not put it in proper

context. Context will add a reference to why the survey was conducted and what the results mean under that frame. This context, they hope, will provide some ways to approach what may be seen as ‘problems’ on campus.

Planning for the survey began in August at the administrative retreat, before the 2005/2006 school year started. According to Dean of Students Mike Ford, the CORE survey was prompted in a very significant way by the Jessica Payne Consulting report on Hampshire's retention.

Drug use is not entirely a social problem on campus, but also has strong academic influences, says Ford. He references an excerpt from the interviews in the retention study:

“...[I]t was ‘Okay, do I go back to my dorm room now because it's midnight and go to sleep because I have an eight o'clock class, or do I smoke another bowl and chill out with my friends and risk not waking up on time.’ And I was, ‘Well I don't have to go to class, it's not like I have to be in class right now. It's not like I have only three classes I can miss and then my grade drops...’” (excerpt from interview 17).

If students are using substances rather than going to class because there is nothing “lingering over” them, as one student put it, administrators ask about what problems this may point to.

In Ford's opinion, some amount of substance use is linked in a very direct way to the quality of academics at Hampshire. Along with the above quote and other excerpts from the retention study, Ford says that unchallenging classes and

lack of direct communication about responsibility can be blamed for some of the drug use, if students are often choosing to use drugs rather than getting a good night's sleep for class in the morning. The upward trend of drug use may be related to falling academic standards.

Whatever the reasons, administrators feel the results of the CORE survey should be accompanied by discussion. There are plans to hold an all community meeting as soon after classes end as possible. They hope this will be the beginning of a series of productive discussions about community health, drugs, alcohol, and related issues, as well as reinforcing the school's policy on such matters.

There is speculation on one possible outcome, the creation of a student/staff advisory board to address community health concerns. This idea has been discussed somewhat and will probably be brought up before students at the community meeting. Hampshire's drug and alcohol policy has been reprinted from the student handbook for your convenience:

“Hampshire College, in accordance with both federal legislation and existing college policy, is committed to providing a drug free, healthful and safe environment for all students. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance, and the unauthorized possession or use of alcoholic beverages on the Hampshire College campus or as part of any college activity or business off the college premises is prohibited. If a student violates this policy disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution may result as deemed appropriate.”

CORE DRUG AND ALCOHOL SURVEY – HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE TREND REPORT

Table 1 – Percent Students Reporting Use in Past Year

	1995	2000	2006
Alcohol	91%	87%	92%
Tobacco	71%	54%	59%
Marijuana	69%	57%	71%
Other illegal drugs	30%	37%	45%

Table 2 – Percent Students Reporting Use in Past Month

	1995	2000	2006
Alcohol	69%	76%	82%
Tobacco	44%	43%	46%
Marijuana	32%	37%	51%
Cocaine	1%	3%	5%
Amphetamines	6%	7%	10%
Sedatives	3%	3%	5%
Hallucinogens	6%	5%	7%
Opiates	1%	1%	5%
Inhalants	1%	0%	1%
Designer drugs	0%	7%	1%
Other drugs	0%	1%	3%

Table 3 – Alcohol Quantities

	1995	2000	2006
Average drinks per week	2.3	3.7	4.9
Binged in past two weeks (a "binge" is 5+ drinks at one sitting)	19%	32%	47%

Table 4 – Perceptions of Campus Policies/Practices

	1995	2000	2006
Think campus has alcohol and drug policies	92%	93%	91%
Think campus has an alcohol/drug prevention program	43%	13%	21%
Think campus is not concerned about preventing alcohol/drug use	28%	41%	40%
Think average student uses alcohol once/week +	84%	93%	96%
Think average student uses drugs once/week +	70%	83%	89%
Prefer not to have alcohol at parties	29%	18%	18%
Prefer not to have drugs at parties	52%	41%	43%

Table 5 – Behavior Students Attribute to Alcohol/Drug Use

	1995	2000	2006
Admit to public misconduct	27%	32%	36%
Experienced personal problem/injury	23%	21%	38%
In trouble with police/authorities	6%	7%	14%
Damaged property	6%	6%	8%
Driven a car under the influence	15%	18%	22%
Got in a fight	14%	17%	25%
Attempted suicide	1%	1%	3%
Seriously considered suicide	4%	7%	9%
Sustained physical injury	9%	13%	23%
Been taken advantage of sexually	9%	11%	12%
Thought I might have a drinking/drug problem	8%	16%	22%
Tried and failed to stop using	5%	7%	11%
Done something I later regretted	24%	32%	44%
Performed poorly on a test/important project	9%	15%	23%
Missed a class	15%	24%	26%
Been criticized by someone I know	26%	27%	34%
Had a memory loss	21%	26%	40%
Got nauseated or vomited	40%	52%	60%
Had a hangover	49%	58%	67%

CORE ALCOHOL AND DRUG SURVEY - FORM 191

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Core Alcohol and Drug Survey was developed to measure alcohol and other drug usage, attitudes, and perceptions among college students at two and four-year institutions. Development of this survey was funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The survey includes several types of items about drugs and alcohol. One type deals with the students' attitudes, perceptions, and opinions about alcohol and other drugs, and the other deals with the students' own use and consequences of use. There are also several items on students' demographic and background characteristics as well as perception of campus climate issues and policy.

Key Findings from students at Hampshire College (Online)

Following are some key findings on the *use of alcohol*:

- 91.7 % of the students consumed alcohol in the past year ("annual prevalence").
- 82.1 % of the students consumed alcohol in the past 30 days ("30-day prevalence").
- 79.4 % of underage students (younger than 21) consumed alcohol in the previous 30 days.
- 47.2 % of students reported binge drinking in the previous two weeks. A binge is defined as consuming 5 or more drinks in one sitting.

Following are some key findings on the *use of illegal drugs*:

- 70.8 % of the students have used marijuana in the past year ("annual prevalence").
- 50.5 % of the students are current marijuana users ("30-day prevalence").
- 44.5 % of the students have used an illegal drug other than marijuana in the past year ("annual prevalence").
- 20.9 % of the students are current users of illegal drugs other than marijuana ("30-day prevalence").

The most frequently reported illegal drugs used in the past 30 days were:

- 50.5 % Marijuana (pot, hash, hash oil)
- 10.3 % Amphetamines (diet pills, speed)
- 7.3 % Hallucinogens (LSD, PCP)

Following are some key findings on the *consequences* of alcohol and drug use:

- 36.4 % reported some form of public misconduct (such as trouble with police, fighting/argument, DWI/DUI, vandalism) at least once during the past year as a result of drinking or drug use.
- 37.6 % reported experiencing some kind of serious personal problems (such as suicidality, being hurt or injured, trying unsuccessfully to stop using, sexual assault) at least once during the past year as a result of drinking or drug use.

Following are some key findings on *opinions* about the campus environment:

- 91.4 % of students said the campus has alcohol and drug policies;
- 7.9 % said they “don’t know”; and
- 0.8 % said there wasn’t a policy.

- 21.2 % of students said the campus has an alcohol and drug prevention program;
- 63.0 % said they “don’t know”; and
- 15.8 % said there wasn’t a program.

- 42.1 % of students said the campus is concerned about the prevention of drug and alcohol use;
- 17.6 % said they “don’t know”; and
- 40.3 % said the campus is not concerned.

With regard to students’ perceptions of other students’ use:

- 96.4 % of students believe the average student on campus uses alcohol once a week or more.
- 88.6 % of students believe the average student on this campus uses some form of illegal drug at least once a week.
- 18.3 % of students indicated they would prefer *not* to have alcohol available at parties they attend.
- 42.6 % of students indicated they would prefer *not* to have drugs available at parties they attend.

Use of Drugs

The following tables provide additional details about students’ reported use of drugs at this institution. Unless otherwise indicated, percentages are based on the total number of students responding validly to a given item.

For comparison purposes some figures are included from a reference group of 58392 students from 145 institutions who completed the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey Long Form in 2002, 2003, or 2004.

More detailed analyses can be found in A Report to College Presidents: 1995, 1996, and 1997.

In general, substantial proportions of students report having used alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana in response to the question, “At what age did you first use _____?” whereas comparatively few report having used each of the other substances. This question examines “lifetime prevalence” as opposed to annual prevalence and 30-day prevalence.

Table 2 describes lifetime prevalence, annual prevalence, 30-day prevalence, and high frequency use (3 times a week or more).

Table 2 - Substance Use

<i>Substance</i>	<i>Lifetime Prevalence</i>		<i>Annual Prevalence</i>		<i>30-Day Prevalence</i>		<i>3X/Week or more</i>	
	<i>Coll.</i>	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Coll.</i>	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Coll.</i>	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Coll.</i>	<i>Ref.</i>
Tobacco	66.2	55.4	59.2	41.3	45.7	31.0	25.0	21.2
Alcohol	92.5	85.8	91.7	80.8	82.1	67.5	25.2	23.5
Marijuana	79.5	47.0	70.8	31.1	50.5	18.1	22.4	8.2
Cocaine	21.9	9.5	16.3	5.3	5.4	2.2	0.2	0.4
Amphetamines	33.8	17.4	23.0	8.7	10.3	4.5	2.5	3.1
Sedatives	21.3	8.4	14.1	4.7	5.4	2.3	0.5	0.6
Hallucinogens	39.5	10.1	30.3	4.1	7.3	1.2	0.2	0.2
Opiates	17.8	3.2	13.7	1.6	5.1	0.8	0.0	0.3
Inhalants	9.5	4.5	3.3	1.4	0.8	0.7	0.0	0.2
Designer drugs	17.5	10.7	8.4	5.3	0.6	1.4	0.2	0.3
Steroids	0.6	1.6	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.3
Other drugs	18.8	4.3	12.0	2.1	2.9	0.9	0.2	0.2

Notes:

Coll. = Hampshire College (Online)

Ref. = Reference group of 58392 college students

Consequences of Alcohol and Drug Use

The proportion of students who report having had problems as a result of drinking or drug use is another indicator of the level of substance abuse. The percentages of students who reported that within the past year they had various problematic experiences are given in Table 3. The top group of items represents public misconduct or behaviors that involve actual or potential harm to others. The second group represents possibly serious personal problems. The last group may consist of less serious (and more common) experiences which nevertheless may indicate excessive use.

Table 3 - Problematic Experiences

<i>This Institution</i>	<i>Reference Group</i>	<i>Experience</i>
0.8	2.0	Been arrested for DWI/DUI
13.7	13.1	Been in trouble with police, residence hall, or other college authorities
8.4	7.5	Damaged property, pulled fire alarms, etc.
21.9	32.1	Driven a car while under the influence
25.4	31.4	Got into an argument or fight
2.7	1.6	Tried to commit suicide
9.4	4.3	Seriously thought about suicide
22.8	13.9	Been hurt or injured
12.3	10.1	Been taken advantage sexually
3.3	3.4	Taken advantage of another sexually
11.0	6.0	Tried unsuccessfully to stop using
22.2	10.5	Thought I might have a drinking or other drug problem
22.8	24.1	Performed poorly on a test or important project

April 28, 2006

loves you

Table 3 - Problematic Experiences (cont.)

<i>This Institution</i>	<i>Reference Group</i>	<i>Experience</i>
43.6	36.0	Done something I later regretted
25.8	32.4	Missed a class
34.4	29.0	Been criticized by someone I know
39.8	31.1	Had a memory loss
60.4	50.5	Got nauseated or vomited
67.2	60.3	Had a hangover

Differences among Student Groups

Table 4 compares substance use patterns and consequences of several campus groups: males and females, younger and older, academically more and less successful, and on and off-campus residents.

Table 4 - Differences among Student

	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Age</i>		<i>Average Grades</i>		<i>Campus Residence</i>	
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>16-20</i>	<i>21+</i>	<i>A-B</i>	<i>C-F</i>	<i>On</i>	<i>Off</i>
Sample Sizes:	392	238	417	221	497	4	604	34
Currently use (in the past 30 days) alcohol	83.4	80.9	79.4	87.5	81.9	100.0	81.5	93.9
Currently use (in the past 30 days) marijuana	49.1	52.1	51.2	49.1	50.5	50.0	51.1	39.4
Currently use (in the past 30 days) illegal drugs other than marijuana	18.9	24.4	23.5	15.8	21.3	25.0	21.0	18.8
Had 6 or more binges in the past 2 weeks	2.6	5.9	4.3	3.2	3.4	25.0	3.6	9.1
Have driven a car while under the influence during past year	19.8	24.8	20.3	24.9	21.4	75.0	21.1	36.4
Have been taken advantage of sexually during past year	12.3	11.7	13.4	10.1	12.8	0.0	11.9	18.2
Have taken advantage of another sexually during past year	3.1	3.5	2.9	4.1	3.7	25.0	3.2	6.1

Sample Demographics

32.8	% were freshmen
24.5	% were sophomores
21.2	% were juniors
20.4	% were seniors
0.0	% were graduates
1.1	% were other
93.7	% were in the "typical" college age range of 18-22.
62.2	% were female.
5.3	% lived off campus.
57.8	% worked part-time or full-time.
100.0	% were full-time students.
33.7	% reported spending at least 5 hours per month in volunteer work.



Drag Ball Not a Drag

and Other News to Jacob Lefton

by Emily Geminder and Kate Lindroos

Quote from RuPaul to Mr. Lefton: "I do not impersonate females! How many women do you know who wear seven-inch heels, four-foot wigs, and skintight dresses?"

In his article "Drag Ball Is Not Worth All the Fuss," Jacob Lefton outlines his reasons for opposing Drag Ball. Some of his assumptions include:

1. To dress in drag means to dress as the opposite gender; that "to dress in drag implies gender division."

2. Drag Ball is an event that promotes intoxication. (Mr. Lefton then proceeds to supply alternative events to attend, such as Deathfest, where, "You don't have to get drunk, put yourself in compromising situations, or contribute to negative socialization on campus.")

3. Drag Ball is simply a "poor excuse to have a party," with no redeeming worth outside itself.

4. The atmosphere of Drag Ball is not conducive to conversation, nor is it intellectually stimulating.

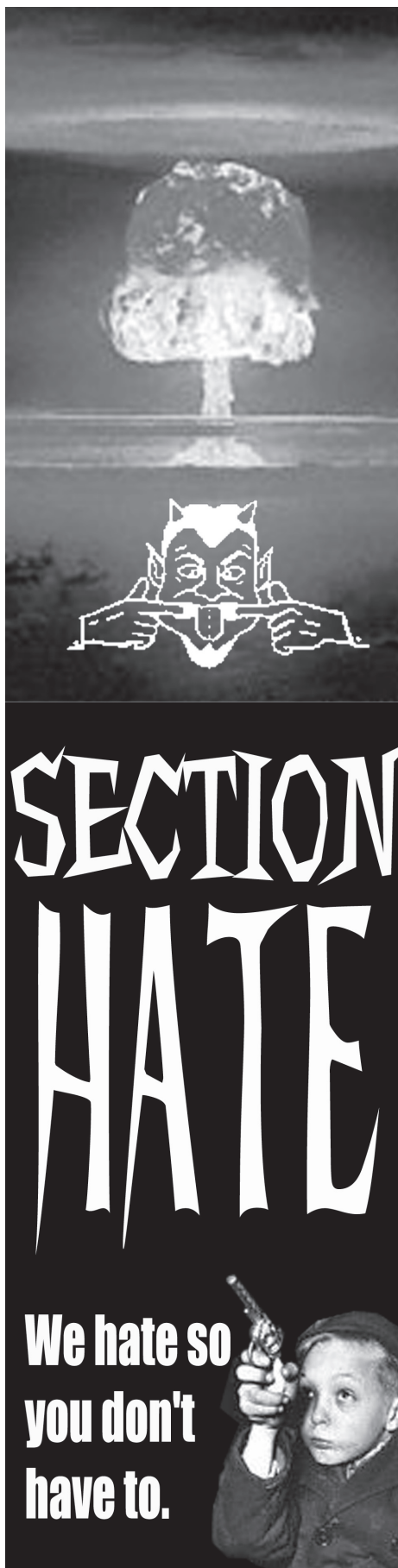
5. Drag Ball is not "healthy for our community," and represses an open gender discourse.

Mr. Lefton's definition of drag is one that reinforces the heteronormative gender binaries he claims to rebuke. By defining drag as only encompassing two genders, and by assuming dressing in drag entails switching between these two genders, he limits the infinite possibilities of gender transgression. We have the

power to continually define and redefine the terms of gender and its transcendence. Drag can simply be thought of as temporarily impersonating the culture associated with any single or combined modes of gender. A quick glance around the back room of SAGA at Drag Ball would reveal a multitude of gender possibilities and personal contributions to the ever-expanding definition of gender. For instance, there were men dressed as men and women dressed as women, not all scantily clad; there were sightings of asexual possibilities from those garbed in togas to at least one bear; and many simply went in their usual forms of dress.

Mr. Lefton sees Drag Ball as "pushing our campus backward on social issues." He views Deathfest as a more socially responsible event. How much money did Deathfest raise for AIDS this year? Drag Ball's large turnout contributed \$581.15 to the Hampshire AIDS Walk Team, which helps fund the National AIDS Walk. In addition, the campus-wide distribution of the Drag Ball zine, contributed to consciousness-raising efforts surrounding issues of sexual consent and aggression. By claiming Drag Ball inhibits our community's gender discourse and promoting events such as Deathfest instead, does Mr. Lefton mean to say Deathfest pushes our campus to be more progressive, more inclusive? Drag Ball builds a community for anyone regardless of gender identification, providing a space for those who don't associate with heteronormative gender standards, as well as for those who might not usually explore alternate gender possibilities. It is thus inherently gender inclusive. Many of the people

(Continued on next page)



An open letter to all students who eat in the cafeteria:

Apr. 24, 2006

Dear friends;

Thanks to the majority of you for not leaving your trays and things for me to pick up at the end of the day.

Generally, it seems like an estimated 5-15 of you leave trays or dishes for me to pick up during clean up. Last weekend, at a time when I'm stressed about final projects and have lots of work to do, only maybe two people forgot to pick up after themselves. To those of you that did, that was much appreciated!!

I don't know if everyone is aware of this, but when you leave things at tables in the cafeteria, someone has to pick them up. That someone is me, or whoever is

working the cleanup shift that day, and it is not our job to pick up your tray. Personally, I think it's kind of gross to carry someone else's tray and throw away the contents, and it takes a lot of time for me to collect assorted cups, plates, forks and napkins from tables in each dining area.

It is doubtful that people are leaving their trays to make be spiteful to me specifically. Still, when I see the things people leave lying around, and the destruction or trashing of public spaces on campus, I see a pattern of disrespect for the community. It's something that affects everyone, especially those of us who have

to clean it up.

I understand that not everyone is mature enough to think about how their actions affect others. Still I hope that Hampshire is one place where people learn how to think that way. Think before you trash a public space or leave things lying around, because there is a group of really great people who keep the campus running, and who are affected by your living habits. And thank you, to everyone who is part of Hampshire College, students and staff.

-Flarnie Nonemaker



by Flarnie Nonemaker

DRAG BALL

(Continued from previous page)

who worked passionately to orchestrate the event are the very people who Mr. Lefton claims Drag Ball excludes, such as people who don't identify with any single gender or even the terms of gender at all. Drag Ball does not only promote the glorification of gender but also permits the exploration of gender's fluidity.

Furthermore, contrary to Mr. Lefton's claims that Drag Ball promotes an atmosphere of intoxication, many attendants chose not to drink or indulge in any substances. The event's collective effervescence provides its own healthy intoxication, in which the only hangover is acquired stories to share with friends. Does that not promote community, Mr. Lefton?

Mr. Lefton thinks we would all be

better off to attend Deathfest, for the social and intellectual stimulation of roleplaying and narrative anticipation. Why should gender roleplaying and sexual anticipation be differentiated, relegated to the realm of the illicit and irresponsible? If we isolate sexuality from the rest of human experience and call it the "most basic animal desire," we not only limit the possibilities of gender but also our individual potentials as social beings in this world. This very alienation contributes to the shrouding of sexuality in a quagmire of ignorance and dangerous politicization. While Drag Ball may not be Mr. Lefton's cup of tea, he has no right to dismiss its potential for progressive discourse.



HOUSING LOTTERY IS TO HAVING FUN

AS

TOM CRUISE IS TO SANE

- SAGA WHITE BOARD

SECTION
SPEAK

{ Privacy }

by Stephen Morton

Laws are brewing which threaten your privacy online. Last June, ZDNet reported on attempts by the US Department of Justice to lay the groundwork for an expansion to what data an ISP is legally required to retain [1]. At present, this is governed by the 1996 Electronic Communication Transactional Records Act, which requires ISPs to retain any record in their possession for 90 days upon request by a governmental agency. The Department of Justice was reported to be interested in a mandatory two month minimum retention of certain classes of data.

Europe led the way with this sort of law. Governmental agencies there were, as early as 2001, pushing for minimum retention for between one and three years of logs of phone calls, SMS, e-mail, and other internet traffic. Content was not to be recorded, only the data needed for traffic analysis and tracing of sources. The Bush administration at that time sided with business interests against this sort of logging requirement, stating that their method gave ISP the flexibility "to retain or destroy the records they generate based upon individual assessments of resources, architectural limitations, security and other business needs."

A year ago, France, the UK, Ireland, and Sweden made the latest push for mandatory data retention. A subsequent report was filed by the European Parliament's civil liberties and home affairs committee cautioned that this plan possibly violated the European Convention on Human Rights, and that, furthermore, it wouldn't work. "Given the volume of data to be retained, particularly Internet data, it is unlikely that an appropriate analysis of the data will be at all possible. Individuals involved in organized crime and terrorism will easily


find a way to prevent their data from being traced," the report said. It went on to calculate that if an ISP were to log all traffic data, the database would be between 20,000 and 40,000 terabytes in size, an unmanageable size given current technology.

The European Parliament voted against the plan in June, but pressure to adopt the measures remained, and in December a measure was passed to require ISPs to retain logs for between six months and two years [2]. The vote passed 378 to 197. The Bush administration similarly changed it's mind, and is now pressing to institute similar measures here. The rallying cry for the US push is to combat child pornography, but the implications are much broader than that. The data retained would be available for any type of investigation, and if the european model is adopted, the range of data is quite broad.[3]

"Proposals for mandatory data retention tend to adhere to one of two models: Address storage or some kind of content storage. In the first model, businesses must record only which Internet address is assigned to a customer at a specific time. In the second, which is closer to what Europe adopted, more types of information must be retained—including telephone numbers dialed, contents of Web pages visited, recipients of e-mail messages and so on."

The Democrats are skeptical of these measures, as they should be, but they are forced to be so in very careful terms. If you oppose this, it might sound like you're for child pornography. Said Rep. Bart Stupak, "I'm against this child porn stuff, but at the same time, let's not further erode the rights of the American people." Strong words.

The thing is, none of it will work to stop child porn or terrorism, or any



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Propaganda,
Editorials.

sort of more big brotherly surveillance of legitimate activities. The age of the anonymous internet is here already, and nothing law agencies can do will put it back in its box. Under even the more draconian European model, content is not retained. What this means is that only traffic analysis is available, and tools to fight this are readily available. Jim Harper, working with Homeland Security on the proposed techniques, warned strongly against them. "The true criminals will go and use random Wi-Fi nodes where you can get anonymous access," he said. "You haven't done anything but increase surveillance of law-abiding citizens."

Even without finding a public wireless network, software exists to make traffic patterns anonymous and indecipherable. Tor is a not quite mature implementation of onion routing techniques. The basic idea is this: instead of sending a data request directly to its destination, it's sent to a server machine running Tor. This server sends the request through a random sequence of at least other Tor servers, before exiting and going to its intended destination. The response follows back through the maze of random servers and gets to you. This has the effect of massively confusing where any particular data packet originated from and where its destination is. Traffic analysis is largely defeated.

Tor has the additional ability to not only hide a client, but also a server. If configured as a hidden service, a web server can be made available exclusively through the Tor network, without the need for a public IP address.

Email can be hidden through the use of anonymous remailers. Using these, email can be sent to a server which strips the message of its identifying information, and forwards it on to its intended destination. Various versions of these exist, and can be used in stages, one reloader after another, with each knowing only where it came from immediately before and where it is going immediately after. This is achieved by encrypting

the routing information so that it can only be revealed at a specific stage of its delivery by a specific reloader. Set up an anonymous reloader as a hidden service under Tor, and several of these already exist, and finding where an email came from or went becomes incredibly difficult.

This encryption is also recommended for use on the actual message, even if records are not being kept by the ISPs of the content. PGP, for Pretty Good Privacy, is the preeminent such encryption scheme. It works by an asymmetric key mechanism: you have a public and a private key. The public key you want to put everywhere possible, people can use it to encrypt a message to you. Once this is done, only your private key will decrypt it. Keys can be made to be very secure, to the point where governmental agencies have little hope of attacking it with brute force.

Along these lines is the Freenet project. Freenet uses strong encryption to create a file-sharing network that is impossible for anyone to shut down. Any user of the system becomes a node, and any particular node knows only how to locate a few of its "neighbors." When requesting a file, the request is sent to the nodes you know, which in turn send it to nodes they know, until the file is found and sent back along the chain to you. Because of the method of implementation, no one can know who put a file into Freenet originally, who has retrieved it, or where it exists in the system at present. The data exists on someone's computer, but it is impossible to tell whose unless you happen to be on a node directly connected to the originating node. Freenet in particular is seeing application by dissidents in China who use it to distribute anti-government documents to their peers safely. Freenet itself is vulnerable to traffic analysis, but a program like Tor can be used in conjunction with it to solve this problem.

It's also possible to use strong

encryption like the above to transfer money securely and pseudonymously through the internet. Some implementations of this idea currently exist or have done so in the past, but none have gained much popularity as of yet. Such a system allows for dealings between pseudonymous individuals on the internet to also exchange money without the notice of any larger government agency.

Developments like these ensure that attempts to make laws like the proposed data retention laws will never work for their intended purpose, but also so that they can never be used for a more oppressive purpose. The age of crypto-anarchism is at hand. The anarchist's dream of a entirely non-hierarchical society is possible, today, not in the real world, but online, in cipherspace.

[Crypto-anarchists] argue that the laws of mathematics are stronger than the laws of man, and that crypto-anarchism therefore is inevitable: As long as there is a minimum of free speech, it is impossible to stop people from transmitting encrypted messages.

[1] http://news.zdnet.com/2100-1009_22-5748649.html

[2] http://news.zdnet.com/2100-9595_22-5995089.html

[3] http://news.zdnet.com/2100-9588_22-6061187.html

Further Reading:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crypto-anarchism>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pretty_Good_Privacy

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anonymous_reloader

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tor_%28anonymity_network%29

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freenet>

<http://www.wired.com/news/technology/0,70017-0.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anonymous_internet_banking



A Not So Common Ground...

by Tucker Slosburg

First, I want to thank Jacob Lefton, if not for his encouragement and insistence, this essay would never have been written. Going against dominant trend of thought is never an easy thing to do. Writing something that one knows will upset people makes the task all the more difficult. Nevertheless, having a slightly different perspective on the trip to New Orleans, I've been asked to write them down. I will not address the amount of devastation we encountered in our week in New Orleans because I think those issues have been well explained. Instead, I want to offer a different perspective on the group we worked with: Common Ground. I ask that the reader read with care before becoming outraged. New Orleans was and will always be a sensitive subject to anyone who went down.

Upon arrival, I thoroughly enjoyed the Common Ground experience. It was a relaxed atmosphere of people seemingly united by the work they were doing. This, I thought, was good. I enjoyed the sense of people helping other people. People were proud of the work they were doing, and I was more than happy to participate in such an event. It was only as the week progressed that some of my skepticism came to light. Common Ground encouraged many of the workers one day to attend a Veterans For Peace march. I recognize that the group helped Common Ground get off to a good start, however, I couldn't understand the good that would come of potential workers attending a march instead of working on houses. Since I was leading a work group I went up to

two of the guys from the group that had served in Iraq, and asked what they wanted to do. "There's no way I'm going to that march," one of them said. He continued, "Don't get me wrong, I was there and I'm against the war. But I came down here to do relief work, not protest a war." That stuck with me the rest of the week.

I think some of my frustration comes from the implicit assumptions made by many of the folks at Common Ground. The group's web page does not explicitly state the political agenda of the program. Most people were against the war, against racism, against bigotry, and all sorts of other ideals that I believe are good things. Specifically, the group was fighting local political pressure about potential demolition of the 9th Ward. If one went down to Common Ground leaning moderate to right, he or she would find themselves marginalized in a very serious way. I mentioned my thoughts to another young woman, who said that she was moderate and felt quite marginalized throughout the week. Perhaps, it was the saturation of liberalism that got to me. Irregardless, it raised some issues that I found troubling. Now, I happen to subscribe to the dominant liberal politics of the day, however, I had trouble swallowing the degree of closed-mindedness I found at Common Ground.

Simply put, this is what I got from Common Ground: "sure we are open minded—as long as you agree with us." It took me a week to recognize this because, for the most part, I agree in an

ideological way with Common Grounds ideals. Despite my sympathies, I found the dichotomy of promoting open-mindedness, while disregarding others' values quite troubling.

Perhaps I ought to elaborate on the conception of open-mindedness for a moment, afterall, Common Ground wants people to be sensitive to each other. Eva Brann, one the great thinkers of our age, put it well: "Open-mindedness is nothing more than understanding and respecting others values and beliefs, while subscribing to ones own set of beliefs." Ideally, we will be undisturbed by thoughts and values that differ from our own; nevertheless, we follow our own beliefs. Certainly Common Ground can prescribe to its own set of beliefs, but that people at Common Ground feel marginalized because of their beliefs, in my mind, seems in direct contrast to the notion of respecting differing views. Moreover, Common Ground offered some cases where it promoted one idea and acted to the contrary.

The organization promotes its open mindedness and cultural sensitivity. However, any attempt at discussing the feeling of futility of rebuilding was met with me being insensitive to peoples' needs. The mere fact that no one running the organization would really engage in conversation about the feeling that rebuilding seemed almost futile, was a real shock. I'm not for the demolition of the 9th Ward, but any attempt to discuss otherwise was cast down directly from the group's organizers.

Now in terms of cultural sensitivity,

we were given many talks on respecting the 9th Ward and not treating the place like another party spot on spring break. To me, this mentality made sense. Certainly we could have a little fun to keep our spirits up, but we didn't want to party around a Catholic School that we were guest in. So, when Common Ground hosted a rock concert on the steps of the school, amplifying the music into the neighborhood, I tend to wonder what Common Ground means when they say cultural sensitivity. Moreover, students were juggling things on fire, hoola-hooping, and dancing in the street—literally. For a moment I attempted to go with the flow, but couldn't. The paradox of cultural sensitivity struck me to hard to dance. It didn't seem right.

Now lets look at the slogan for Common Ground: "Solidarity not Charity." At first this makes sense. I liked this phrase. I believed I was in solidarity with the community, or at least I wanted to believe so. Solidarity is not the problem, however. I recognize that Common Ground is working from within the community in an attempt to help people out. The trouble with the phrase is actually the word "charity." After a week in New Orleans, I'm hard pressed to believe that I did not do charity work. I may have done it with the local residents, but I did charity work. I went down as a white privileged male and helped a predominantly black community wrecked by disaster. They needed help. That's why we went down. Saying that we are not doing charity work actually upsets me because then I'm left wondering what I did. It's not that I went down to feel good about myself, but if I didn't help out, I want to know what I did.

I'm told that the phrase is an attempt to move past any stigma designated to

those who need help. Now, this sounds well and good, but I can't for the life of me figure out what is actually being accomplished. Needing people's charity is often a result of circumstance. For instance, I'm from Kansas City. A tornado could strike at any moment and wipe out my neighborhood. There is no way to predict its movement. As soon as my house is gone, as soon as my neighborhood becomes level by a high level tornado, I become a charity case. I, and my family, would need the help of others. There is nothing wrong with this. It's a tragedy and life is unfair. We all at different times go through trouble.

Now, many of you are about to rip this apart because I have yet to discuss the racial politics involved in such a situation, thus making things drastically different. Yes, there are racial politics involved. There are theories that the levees were blown up to racially purge the city. There are many previous factors that caused the disaster. To deny such events would be foolish and ignorant. My concern however is that these people needed help because of a disaster. I'm not so concerned at the moment with how they ended up where they did, whether it was because of racism and politics in the city of New Orleans, or any other reason. They had no homes! That is why I went to New Orleans. That constitutes the need for people's charity. To go down to New Orleans and be told that I'm not doing charity work seriously makes me question what exactly it was that I was doing. The residents of the area certainly thought I was helping them. Perhaps I'm helping move past racial barriers and breaking down any negative stigmas, but I fail to see how. I went down to help out people who needed help. Not because these people can't do it on their own, but because they

could use some help. Everyone I met seemed appreciative of the help.

Let's for a moment discuss why I went down in more detail. I went down to New Orleans because it was the right thing to do. This is my own set of values that I'm taking about now. I went down because I had no previous commitments, no work to do, and I had the means to go. In my mind, there was no question about what I should do over break. I like the idea that the highest level of giving in Judaism is an anonymous giver to an anonymous receiver. I like this because the act transcends the individual. This is why going down was the right thing. It didn't matter if I met the owner of the house, I didn't mind if they met me. My concern was that a disaster occurred, people needed help, and the right thing to do was to go down to New Orleans. New Orleans could have been Mississippi, or it could have been anything else. I went down to help people whose lives have been disrupted in a major way. This is charity, even if it sounds like I've stigmatized a group. They've been stigmatized only insofar as they have experienced a tragedy. People can read more or less in to that. That, however, the crux of it.

Now, I've gone on at great length about my thoughts. Before I close, however, I must let you all know that I do care about the area. It would be a tragedy to see the 9th Ward fall prey to eminent domain. I hope the levees are fixed. I'd like to see the race relations in the city fixed. And yes, I am against the war in Iraq. For the life of me, however, I could not see how Common Ground was open to people who had thoughts other than their own.



Bates Wisdom

Submitted by J. S. Hilliard

Contributors Note: I received these words of wisdom my first year at college. Ryan Bates (name changed) was a freshman I had taken under my wing as a senior in high school. He was a great guy – though a little pudgy, extrememly goofy, a lover of the accordion, and a characteristically bad with women (which is not to say I'm much better). When pressed for advice, he gave me these words of wisdom to see me through my college years.

If the lady is out your “ballpark”.. Simply extend your ego to encompass that realm of ladies..

If you are unsure of what to say to a lady, come up with a compliment. Like “Nice Pants, or I like that ass”

If you ever feel lost in a conversation with a lady, Just nod your head and start calling them Jonny and see what happens. I Guarentee you then THEY

will feel lost...

Never say anything about their eyes.. That is far far to generic.. Instead say things like Nice Fingers.. Or Hair Folacoles.. They will like that a lot more and think you are special.

If a girl is skinny and thinks she is fat, never tell her you think she is fat or skinny, because she will think you are telling her the opisite and meaning the worst possible scenario. Example: If she tells you she thinks she is fat, and you say she is not, she will think you are lying. Instead say with a tear; “Are you tring to dump me? You are way out my league as it is... You don't need anyhelp!”

If talking to a lady of foriengn perswasion. Always try to speak a different language other then each of your own. For instance if you are dating a spanish lady

then take her to a japanese class.. If you learn it together you will bond, and have succesfully wooed.

One final piece of advice: Never try to impress a lady with money. In Fact on the 2nd or 3rd date Test your lady and see if she is falling for you or all those fancy dinners.

Postscript: This advice is unedited and presented in its original form. Unfortunately, his advice has helped me little, as my status single status has remained quite constant. I'm not sure quite what I am doing wrong, for as one sees, I have a great play book above to reference. I guess singleness is just something you have to deal with when you are as badass as me.



QUINTESSSENCE

Earth, Air, Fire, Water, Circus

May Library • 7:30 PM
5TH & 7TH • Lawn

• a CIRCUS FOLK UNITE! production •





Photos by Molly Mcleod





by Jacob Lefton

Excerpts from the Div III log of Christopher Unger

September 19, 1987

I got the committee I wanted finally! Greg agreed, and Marilyn as well, though she was a bit more hesitant. I had to lie somewhat to get her on board. She's got more of a clue about what I really am trying to accomplish here. While she's going to be more help in the end, I can't let her have control over anything – making Greg chair was, I think, the right move.

October 12

Halloween. That's all I'm going to be able to think about for the next few weeks. There's so much to do in preparation! Luckily for me I was able to connect with that guy at Smith who has an inside with someone in the Rare Books room. I shouldn't even be thinking about it until I need it but it's so exciting. I fear if I wrote the name or uttered it, I might attract the wrong attention too soon. At least I've got what I need. It should be smooth sailing until the experiment begins. The book is kind of creepy though. I think the leather was human skin. I mean, the binding looks like it has a belly button.

November 7

I've not written for a bit, I know. I've been so busy first getting ready for the experiments, and then securing the necessary 'materials.' Halloween went well. Perfectly according to plan. In fact, it was so easy... too easy, almost. If I was paranoid, I'd be looking over my shoulder all the time, but luckily I'm not.

December 14

Okay. Something went wrong. Three days ago, the one of the subjects wasn't there any more. I mean, the day before, he was comatose. There's no reason for him to be moving around at all. There was fresh snowfall. His prints went about 100 feet into a nearby field and then disappeared. The book was gone too.

My committee is pressuring me for results, but now I can't get them in full, because I was about to work on this one, but now he's gone. And the book is gone.

December 17

I don't think whatever escaped was human anymore. I'm getting kicked off campus for holidays though, so If the girl is still alive when I come back, I'm going to go into the final phase of this. The book wasn't gone though. It was just, oddly, in my room. I was trying to keep all my work in the lab, but I must have been so tired I accidentally slipped the book in my bag.

January 22

I'm definitely freaking out. I thought I saw the thing that escaped last night. The girl is almost ready, and I think I can't wait any longer before I summon Him. Or attempt to. Either way it goes, they'll remember this Div III. Either it'll be the one that killed Christopher Unger, or the one that killed all Humanity.



I Could Never Get the Hang of Thursdays:

*A fortnightly column by Douglas Adams**

Another Thursday, another column. This is going to be the first of a two-part column, because I'm going to be attempting to create some end-of-the-year extravaganza which will most likely be rather lackluster and come off more as me rambling than anything substantial. I could, I suppose, not hand in a column this week and save them both for next week, in a condensed version, but that would mean I would have missed this week's deadline, and I've been trying to avoid making the same mistakes in the *après vie* that I made in my former, actual life.

Nevertheless. Today's column is about music. Specifically, it is about an argument that I had with a friend of mine earlier this week about a band you may have heard of if you've lived on the planet Earth anytime in the past four decades: The Beatles.

Earlier this week, a friend presented me with this statement: The Beatles album 'Magical Mystery Tour' is, song by song, better than the highly acclaimed Beatles album 'Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band': Did I agree or disagree? Naturally, and much in the vein of any other rabid Beatles fan, I disagreed. Sgt. Pepper, I said, was on a much higher plane than Magical Mystery Tour, both lyrically and musically, even if you did look at it simply on a song-by-song basis without considering the album as a whole. This began an extremely long argument which I decided was interesting enough to be the content of a column. And so, without further delay, I present to you, on a song by song basis, the comparison of 'Sgt. Pepper' and 'Magical Mystery Tour' on strictly lyrical terms.

(It is at this point that I realize that I may have, in fact, been wrong, in which case you are welcome to ignore my column this week, and rest assured that in soon I'll have gone back to whittering on about things like procrastination and sandwiches.)

We begin by comparing the two down to earth yet psychedelic songs, namely, "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" and "Strawberry Fields Forever." While both songs are utter masterpieces, when compared lyrically, it seems clear to me

which stands out. "Lucy" opens with the beautiful lyrics *Picture yourself on a boat on a river / With tangerine trees and marmalade skies*. It's hard to top that, even if you are a Beatle. When you compare those lyrics to these found in "Strawberry Fields", it is clear to see that, while always masterful, sometimes even John wasn't entirely sure what he was talking about. *No one I think is in my tree, I mean it must be high or low / That is you can't you know tune in but it's all right, that is I think it's not too bad*. So Sgt Pepper gains a point for "Lucy". Current score: Sgt Pepper, 1 : Mystery Tour, 0.

Getting all of the psychedelic drug-induced songs out of the way, our next song paring consists of "For the Benefit of Mr. Kite" and "I am the Walrus." While both of these songs were gifts to us from the planet Stoned Out Of Our Gourds, they both contain excellent lyrics. "Mr. Kite": *The band begins at ten to six when Mr. Kite performs his tricks without a sound. / And Mr. H will demonstrate ten sunsets he'll undertake on solid ground*. However, while these are entertaining and creative lists, I must confess that they do not stand a chance when you take into account the random brilliance of "I am the Walrus": *Sitting on a cornflake, waiting for the van to come. Corporation t-shirt, stupid bloody Tuesday, man you've been a naughty boy, you let your face grow long*. I don't need to explain the rest of this one to you. Current score: Sgt Pepper, 1 : Mystery Tour, 1.

Another paring of songs: Consider, if you will, "Good Morning" as compared to "Hello Goodbye". Both silly songs, but well suited to each other. "Good Morning" has moments of lyrical genius as follows: *Nothing to do to save his life, call his wife in. / Nothing to say but what a day, how's your boy been*. "Hello Goodbye" comes in at slow second, countering with only *You say yes, I say no, you say stop, and I say go go go*. Now don't get me wrong; I'm the biggest Beatles fan ever to live. Still, I think they could have put in a bit more effort. Scoreboard says: Sgt Pepper, 2 : Mystery Tour, 1.

We'll tackle the token George Songs next: "Within You, Without You" and "Blue Jay Way". While both of these have more of their fair share of sitar, the

differ greatly in lyrical content. "Within You, Without You", behind the twang of the sitar, offers surprisingly deep and insightful lyrics: *We were talking – about the space between us all / And the people – who hide themselves behind the wall of illusion / Never glimpse the truth – then it's far too late when the pass away*. Compare that to the still pleasant, yet less insightful *There's a fog upon LA / And my friends have lost their way / We'll be over soon they said / Now they've lost themselves instead*. Nice effort, George, but it's clear that you could do better. Scoreboard: Sgt Pepper, 3 : Mystery Tour, 1.

Our last selection for the day (and don't worry, you'll see all of the others next Thursday) is a tough one: "A Day in the Life" versus "Fool on the Hill". Both songs are absolute lyrical strokes of genius. "A Day in the Life" captures the listener with beautiful imagery such as *He blew his mind out in a car / He didn't notice that the lights had changed / A crowd of people stood and stared. / They'd seen his face before. Nobody was really sure if he was from the House of Lords*. Yet "Fool on the Hill" contains these simple, perfect lyrics: *Well on his way, his head in a cloud, / The man of a thousand voices, talking perfectly loud. / But nobody ever hears him, or the sound he appears to make. / And he never seems to notice*. Or even the bridge repetition at the end... *He never listens to them, he knows that they're the fools*. It is a tough decision to make, but in the end, I decided that "Fool on the Hill" take this one. I'm perfectly willing to argue this point if any of you believe I am wrong; convince me, and I will change it.

This leaves us with the following scores: Sgt Pepper, 3: Mystery Tour, 2. I'm only halfway done, but I'm saving the rest for next week, giving the lot of you time to think it over and complain, if you are so inclined. We've still got five more selections, though, so for those of you hoping that Magical Mystery Tour will come out on top...keep hoping. There's still a chance.

*The spirit of Douglas Adams is channeled by Rachel Rakov, who loves the Beatles almost as much as he did.

